

March 17, 2010

**Testimony regarding HB 1145: AN ACT CONCERNING OUTREACH BY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES  
FOR SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM APPLICANTS**

My name is Patricia Placido, MSW. I am the social worker for the Town of Hebron. I work with seniors as well as families in my position. The Supplemental Nutrition Program is an invaluable resource that the state of Connecticut does not use to its fullest extent.

When a family, senior or single person is on a limited income there are certain necessities that a person has to spend their money on. A person needs to have food, water and shelter at a very minimum. When a family is trying to make ends meet spending hundreds of dollars a week on groceries is a contributing factor to why the bills are not being paid. Can you imagine as a parent explaining to your child why they have to go to bed hungry?

An example that illustrates the importance of the Supplemental Nutrition Plan is the senior that lives off of social security, SSI and her pension. Her monthly income is \$694; she pays \$200 a month for supplemental medical insurance, \$100 a month for taxes on her house and \$200 a month for a mortgage on a house that is falling down around her. This Client receives food stamps in order to be able to make ends meet. If this Client did not receive food stamps I feel confident she would go without eating because she does not make enough money. This woman still drives and therefore also has to pay for car insurance as well as gas and any unexpected repairs.

A divorced mother with 3 children who lives off of alimony and child support because she is unable to find a job uses the food pantry in Hebron to supplement the food stamps she receives. This mother pays \$1300 a month in rent and only receives \$1800 in income monthly. She has 3 children, 2 in school that she must support by herself. This Client identifies food stamps as her "lifeline".

The Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) is not consistent with the processing of SNAP applications. Some people have to apply over and over again and others are approved in a timely manner. Once a person receives food stamps they are assigned a DSS worker which means almost nothing because Clients reports leaving many messages with no return phone call.

Thank you for your time with this matter. I can be contacted at (860) 228-1700 x204.